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Abstract of thesis on residential adult education in the United States. Traces roots of this type of education and describes a wide variety of current variations on the residential theme, including programs of organized labor and religious education. Includes a rationale of residential adult education from the point of view of learning theory and offers projections on the future of residential adult education in the United States.

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RESIDENTIAL ADULT EDUCATION - AN ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Robert Hugo Schacht, Ph.D.
The University of Wisconsin, 1957

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RESIDENTIAL ADULT EDUCATION – AN ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

(Publication No. 22,41[illegible])

Robert Hugo Schacht, Ph.D.
The University of Wisconsin, 1957

Supervisor: Professor Burton W. Kreitlow

The purpose of this thesis was to study the past and project the future of residential adult education in the United States. The writer was concerned lest the rapid expansion into this type of adult education be entered into without an adequate understanding of the roots from which it has grown, the psychological foundations upon which it must build, and a philosophical concern for the direction it might take.

The Introduction recounts the recent interest in the subject as evidenced by the activities of the Section on Residential Adult Education of the Adult Education Association of the United States of America. The first three chapters trace the roots of residential adult education back to the Chautauqua movement, the Danish folk schools in the United States, and various adaptations of the folk school idea. Subsequent chapters describe a wide variety of current variations on the residential theme, including programs of organized labor and religious education. The current status of residential adult education in Denmark, England, and Canada is sketched to compare its development in those countries with that in the United States.

Chapter VIII presents the rationale of residential adult education from the point of view of learning theory. Chapter IX projects the future of residential adult education in the United States in the light of its history, its consistency with learning theory, and major characteristics of American cultural patterns.

The author claims that residential adult education has the advantages of detachment, environment-break, concentration, time, intimacy, and community all of which are in harmony with accepted principles of learning.

The writer draws four conclusions as to the future of residential adult education in this country:

1) The small, private, informal program will increasingly give way to the large, institutional, and more formal operation.

2) The idea of learning for the sake of developing the whole person will increasingly give way to task-oriented

programs of self-improvement directly related to immediate vocational, professional, or organizational needs.

3) Certain types of residential adult education will increasingly become related to the vacation patterns and family responsibilities of their clientele.

4) The isolated retreat in mountain or forest will increasingly give way to the large, well-equipped modern facility near airline or rail terminal.

Granting that there will always be exceptions to any trend, the author believes that the evidence indicates that residential adult education will increasingly become oriented to higher education, the "center building," and the "conference office." This places tremendous responsibility for the future development of residential adult education upon the kinds of persons in charge of this office.

What this individual should be like, then, becomes a major concern of those who would try to retain the values of residence in a modern campus facility. The paper closes with a description of what the author believes to be the kinds of characteristics such staff persons should have. It calls upon the National University Extension Association and the Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults to work cooperatively in providing for the appropriate professional growth of those who by default or by design will bring about the liquidation or the realization of the concept and potentialities of residential adult education.

401 pages. $5.15. Mic 57-3546

Microfilm copy of complete manuscript of 401 pages available from University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan, $5.15. Enlargements 5-1/2 x 8-1/2 inches, 4 cents per page.